Design Resource

Ikat Textiles of Nuapatna

Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

by
Sakshi Gambhir
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/ikat-textiles-nuapatna

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2. Place
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Introduction

The word 'ikat' is derived from the Indonesian word 'mengikat' which means 'to tie'. Ikat is actually the intricate process of tie-dye (knotting selections of yarn before dipping them in separate colors one at a time) and finally weaving them to produce one of the most delightful designs in multi-hued tones, in motifs drawn from the richness of nature.

The tradition of Ikat in Orissa is fairly old. Historical records available at the Jagannath temple in Puri dating back to 1719 indicate that verses (shlokas) from the Geeta Govinda and calligraphic forms were woven into cloth donated to the temple. This unique Oriya tradition continues to this day. The four basic colors found on Lord Jagannath - black, white, red and yellow - are extensively used in these textiles. Even the motifs - temple border, lotus, conch and wheel - signify the affinity with the reigning deity.

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Place

Nuapatna is a village in Cuttack district of Orissa, famous for silk and cotton single-ikat (weft-ikat) textiles. The weavers here produce a striking range of sarees with a brilliance, glaze and texture that is unmatched. The village has a 'Nuapatna weaver's co-op society' that brings together hundreds of craftsmen under one roof and practices fair trade. Other Ikat clusters in Orissa are Sambalpur, Berhampur and Mayurbhanj.

Nuapatna Weavers Co-op Society building.

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A small house in Nuapatna.

Inventory for raw material and stock management.

A glimpse of the village.

A glimpse of the village

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A glimpse of the village.

A glimpse of the village.

Hand-painted exterior of a house in the village.

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Hand-painted exterior of a house in the village.

Hand-painted exterior of a house in the village.

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A glimpse of the village.

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People

Orissa Ikat dates back to the 12th century when artisans from the Patan region of modern day Gujarat migrated to Orissa and carried forward the craft. Now, these distinctive hand-woven textiles support a thriving cottage industry employing thousands of people. Whereas the weavers in the Sambalpur (double-ikat) cluster belong to the Meher community, the ones in the Nuapatna (single-ikat) belong to the Patra community. Their kids begin to learn the craft from a very early age, seeing their parents practicing it as a part of their daily life.

HemantKund, manager of the Nuapatna Weavers Co-op Society.

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A craftsman spinning the weft on the charkhi.

Starch karigar at work.

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A craftsman spinning the weft on the spindle.

A craftswoman spinning the weft on the charkhi.

A glimpse of the village.

Kids in the village.

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Villagers.

Karigars at work.

SehdevPatra, national awardee for his calligraphic letterform sarees.

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Starch karigar's house.

A craftsman preparing the warp.

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Dyer at work.

Craftsmen opening up the dyed weft.

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Weaver at work.

Tying in process.

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A glimpse of the village.

A young kid in a weaver's house.

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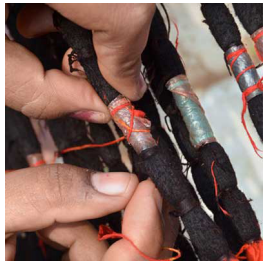
Process

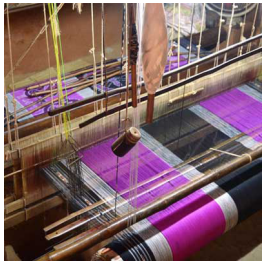
Ikat requires immense skills for detail of de-constructing the desired pattern according to the density of the cloth, winding threads on the frame according to the calculations made, covering selected sections of the weft for resist-dyeing and finally weaving. The entire process involves almost an entire family's participation in different aspects.



Tying

Dyeing

Spinning



Weaving

Quality Check

Starch

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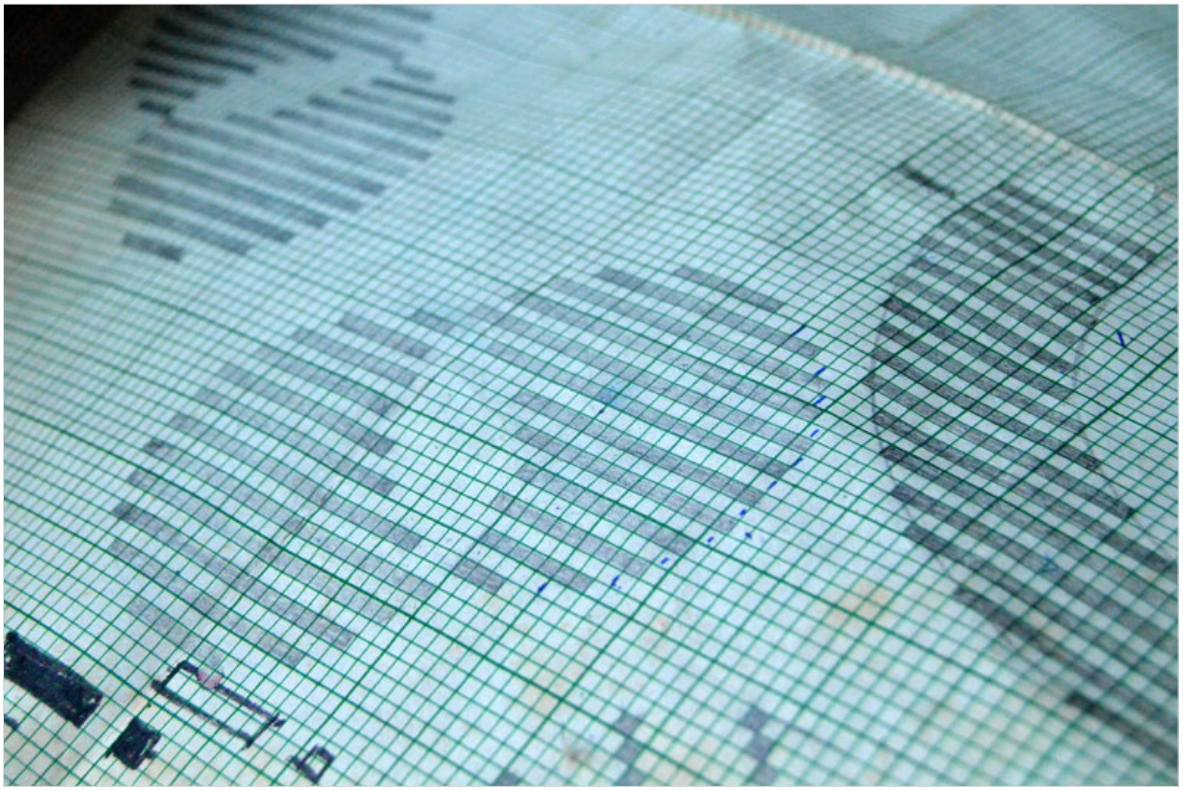
Tying

After the pattern to be woven is sketched on graph paper, degumming of the yarn (mostly cotton or silk) is done. Infact, any yarn undergoes this pre-treatment process (washing it with soda and soap water) to increase pliability and give the saree smooth and shinier texture. Once the yarn is dry, it is tied to a wooden frame. This is the weft of the saree. Bindings (cotton threads or rubber bands) that resist dye penetration are applied to narrow or wide bundles of these threads (from as few as four in very fine Ikat) in locations defined by the intended motif. After the bindings are in place, the threads are taken off the loom and immersed in the first dye bath. After drying, the bindings are cut away; the threads are strung onto the loom again and arranged carefully so that they match exactly. New bindings are put in place for all locations that should not receive color in the second round of dyeing. Then the tied threads are taken off the loom again, immersed in the next dye bath and so on, until the desired multicolored pattern has been created. This technique, called tie-resist-dyeing, requires great precision and meticulous planning - spanning over months, sometimes years.



Pattern-to-be-woven sketched on graph paper.

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Pieces of polythene that are wrapped on the weft for resist-dyeing.

Soota or cotton thread that is wrapped on the weft for resist-dyeing.

Silk yarn.

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Silk yarn.

Weft yarn being tied to a wooden frame.

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Plastic being wrapped on a bunch of weft yarn.

Cotton thread being wrapped on the polythene to prevent dye penetration.

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Cotton thread being wrapped on the polythene to prevent dye penetration

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Cotton thread being wrapped on the polythene to prevent dye penetration.

Tied weft yarns.

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Tied and dyed weft yarns.

Cotton thread being wrapped on the polythene to prevent dye penetration.

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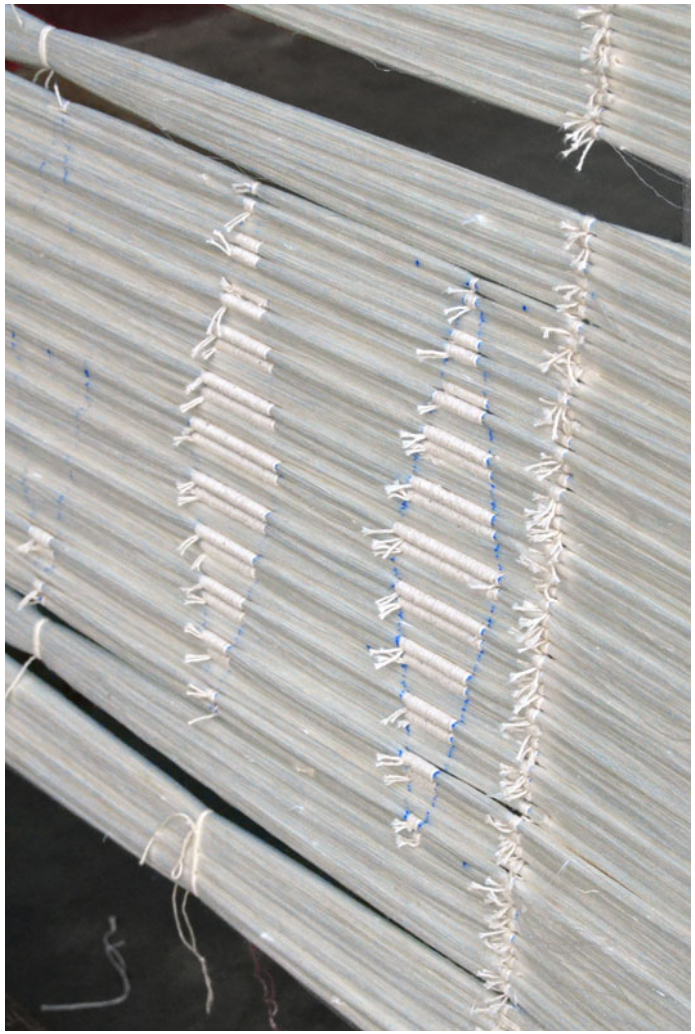
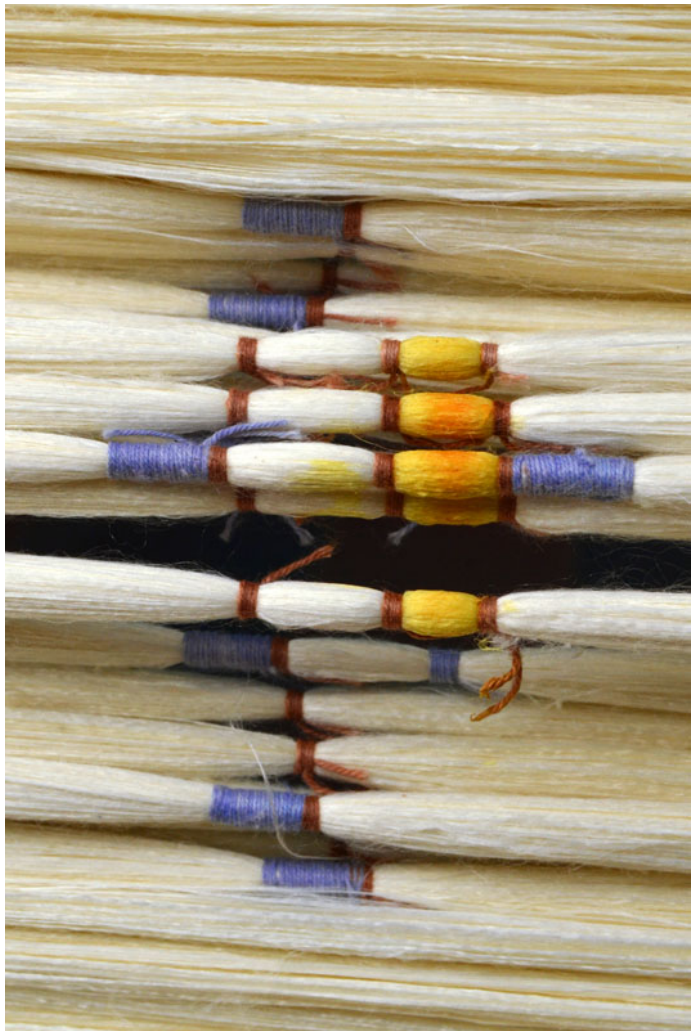


Cotton thread being wrapped on the polythene to prevent dye penetration.



Small portions of weft yarn being colored by hand using a brush (too small to go through another round of dye bath).

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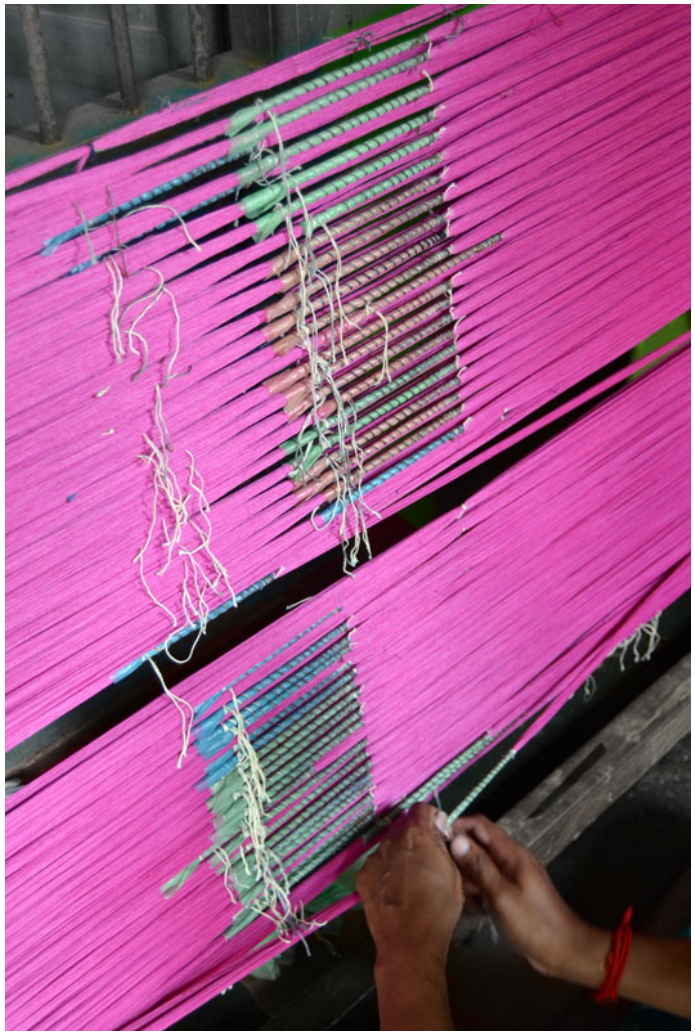
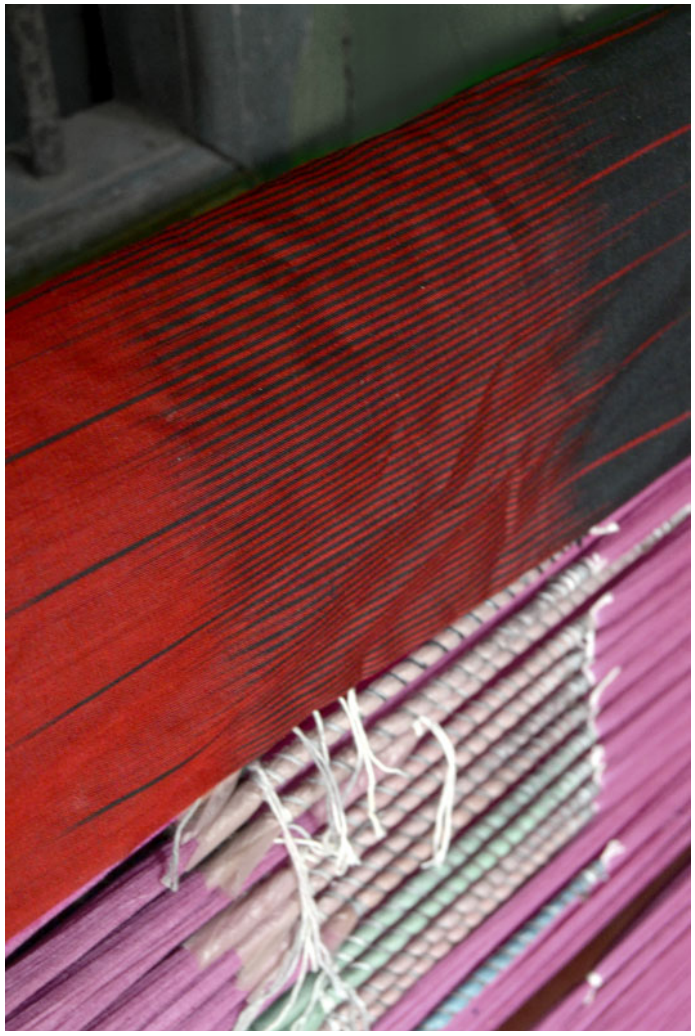


New bindings being put that will prevent dye penetration in the second round of dying.



Tied weft yarn and its corresponding woven fabric.

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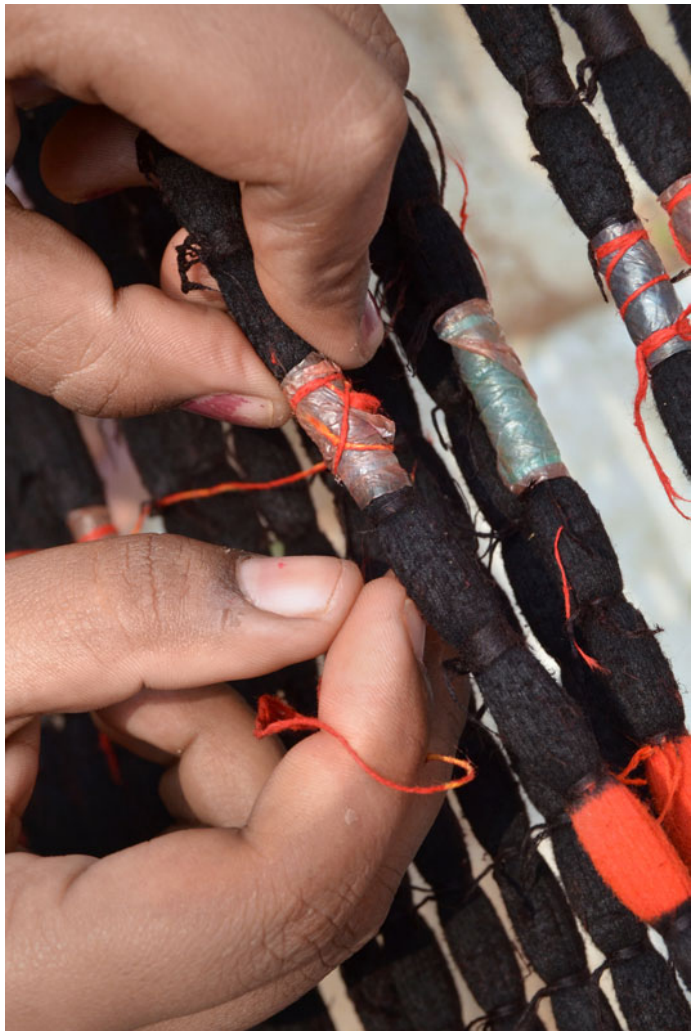

Bindings being opened up.

Weft yarn put on the loom again for applying another round of bindings.

Weft yarn on the wooden frame.

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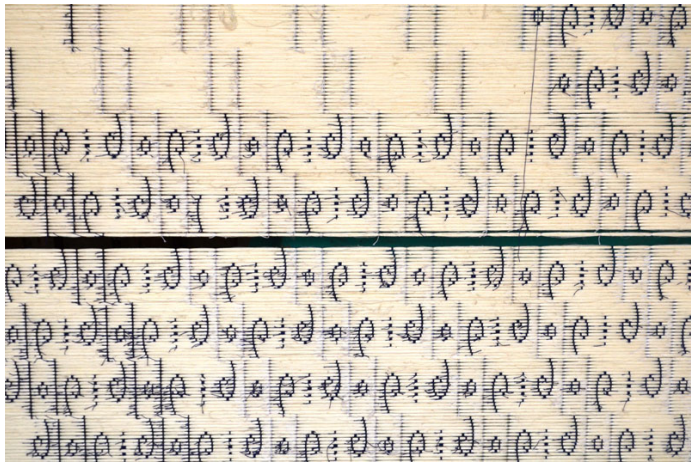
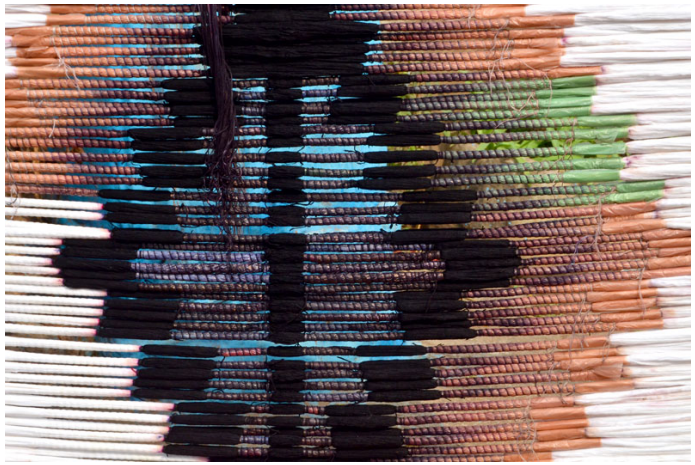


Weft yarn on the wooden frame.

Tying karigar at work.

Weft yarn on the wooden frame.



Weft yarn on the wooden frame.

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Dyeing

Traditionally, colors from plants, flowers and barks of trees were used as dyes in the process. But in recent times, increase in demand for Orissa Ikat has fuelled the need to use chemical dyes as well. Dyeing is done manually with acid dyes, sourced from Calcutta. Once the yarn is tied and dyed in multiple colors, it is left to dry. Then the last set of bindings are cut away, revealing the pattern that was initially planned on the graph.

Acid dyes sourced from Calcutta.

Dyeing karigar at work.

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Dyeing karigar at work.

Dyed weft.

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Dyed weft.

Last set of bindings being cut away.

Last set of bindings being cut away.

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Last set of bindings being cut away.

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Last set of bindings being cut away, revealing the pattern.

Last set of bindings being cut away, revealing the pattern.

The entire weft of the saree, tied and dyed.

Design Resource

Ikat Textiles of Nuapatna

Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

by
Sakshi Gambhir
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/ikat-textiles-nuapatna/process/dyeing

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The entire weft of the saree, tied and dyed.

Design Resource

Ikat Textiles of Nuapatna

Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

by
Sakshi Gambhir
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/ikat-textiles-nuapatna/process/spinning

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Spinning

For the dyed yarn to be woven, they need to be opened up. The bunch is wound on a small wooden charkhi which is put onto an axially rotating stick. One bunch on this charkhi rolls out many more bunches on another charkhi that are of lesser thread-count. Then the bunch is transferred on another charkhi, until single strands of cotton or silk are achieved. These single strands that have the dyed pattern are rolled on to a spindle using a charkha (spin-wheel) that is finally kept in ashuttle that the weaver uses to weave the fabric on the loom.

The dyed weft being opened up.

Dyed weft yarn wound on a small wooden charkhi.

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Dyed weft yarn wound on a small wooden charkhi.

Dyed weft yarn wound on a small wooden charkhi.

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Dyed weft yarn wound on a small wooden charkhi.

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A craftswoman rolling out bunch of weft yarns with lesser thread count.

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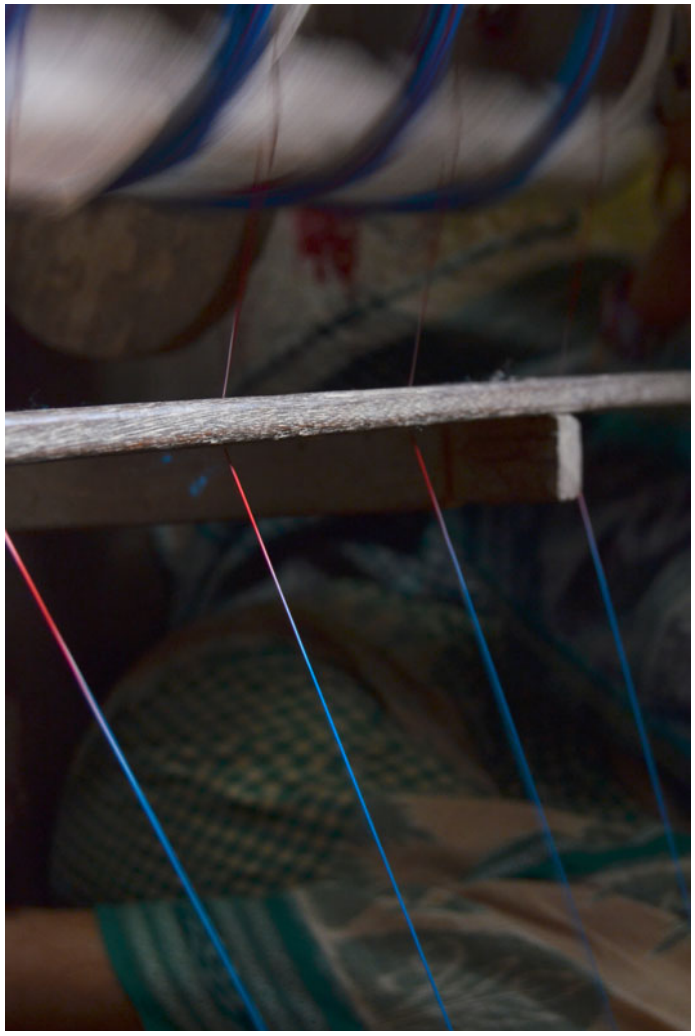
Bunch of weft yarns with lesser thread count.

Bunch of weft yarns with lesser thread count.



Bunch of weft yarns with lesser thread count.

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Dyed weft yarns.

Dyed weft yarns.

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Dyed weft yarns.

Dyed weft yarns.

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Dyed weft yarns.

Craftsmen opening up the dyed weft yarns.

Craftsmen opening up the dyed weft yarns.

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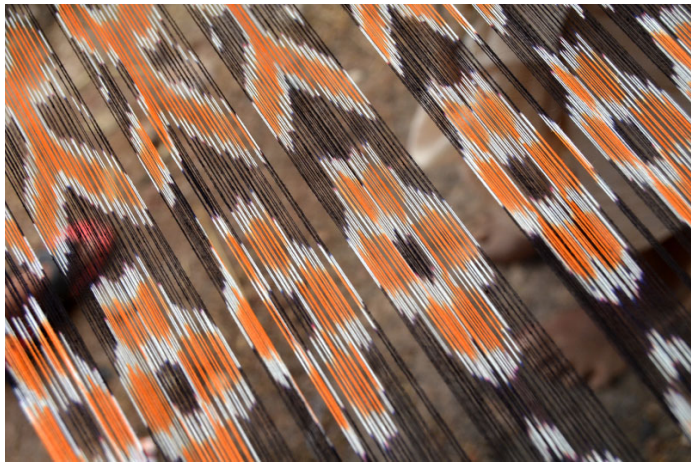

The pattern tied and dyed in the weft yarn.

A craftsmen transferring single strands of silk on the spindle.

Empty spindles.

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A craftsmen transferring single strands of silk on the spindle.

Weft yarn on the spindle.

A craftsmen transferring single strands of silk on the spindle.

A craftsmen transferring single strands of silk on the spindle.

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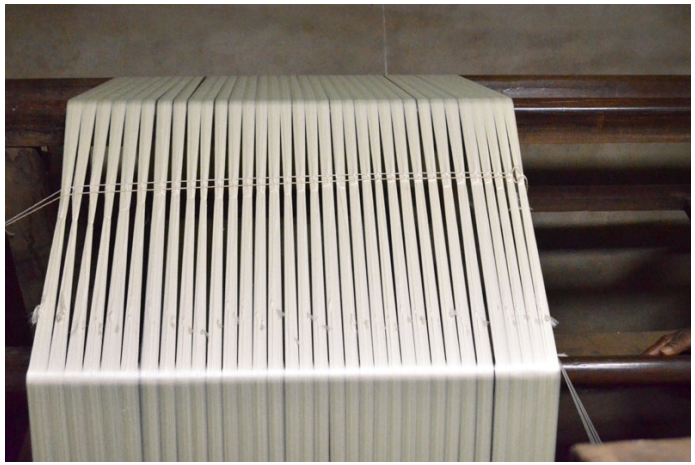
A craftsman preparing the plain warp.

A craftsman preparing the plain warp.



A craftsman preparing the plain warp.

A craftsman preparing the plain warp.

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A craftsman preparing the plain warp.

A craftsman preparing the plain warp.

Design Resource

Ikat Textiles of Nuapatna

Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

by
Sakshi Gambhir
IDC, IIT Bombay

Weaving

Hand Loom

Machine Loom

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/ikat-textiles-nuapatna/process/weaving

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Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

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Source:
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Hand Loom

All the warp threads are threaded through the heald eyelet and its gap in the reed prior to weaving. The reed is like a comb and its purpose is to control the separation of the warp threads. In Nuapatna sarees, the warp yarn is plain i.e. has no pattern. These warp yarns are interlaced by the tie-dyed weft (filling) yarns (kept in the shuttle) running along the width of the loom, producing the woven fabric corresponding to the design on the graph.

Weft Ikat weaving is a slow process as the passes of the weft must be carefully adjusted to maintain the clarity of the patterns. Passing the weft shuttle 80 times to and fro weaves about 1 inch of fabric. Most weavers also combine Ikat pattern with a relief texture in the border of the saree (supplementary warp and weft weaves) that makes it a specialty of the region.

Weft yarn on the spindle.

Design Resource

Ikat Textiles of Nuapatna

Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

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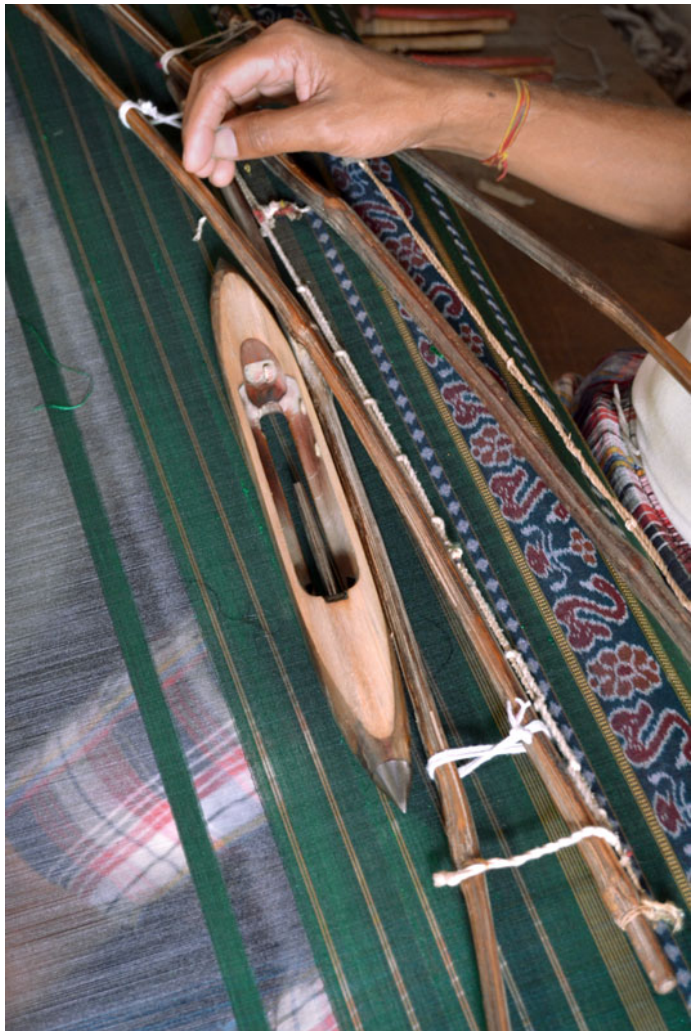
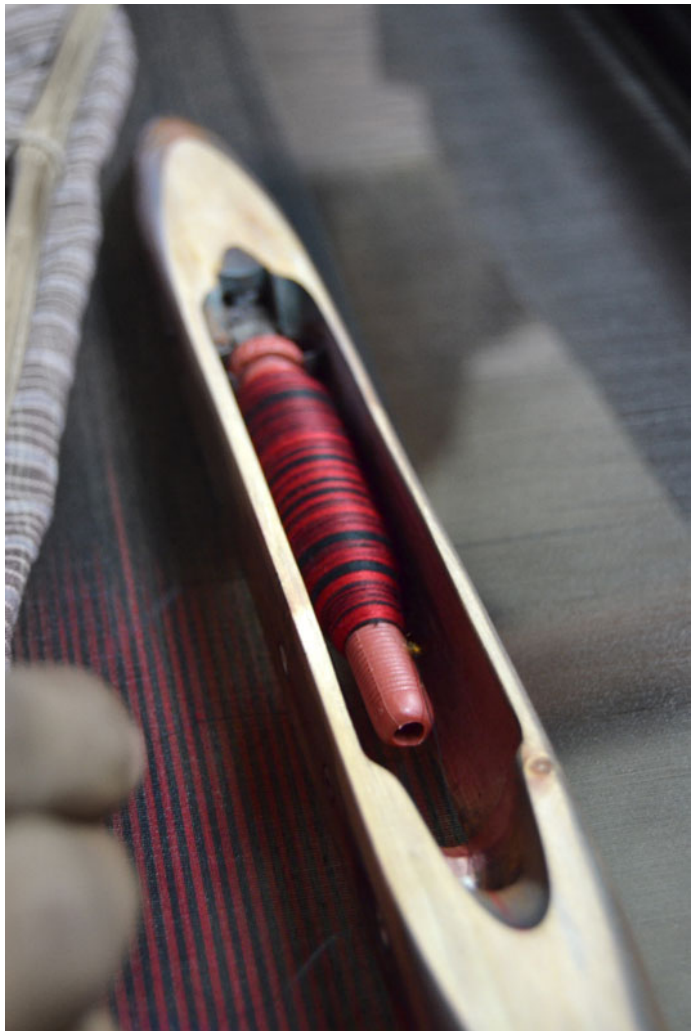


Empty shuttle that will house the loaded spindle.



Spindle with the weft yarn in the shuttle.

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Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

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Source:
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Hand loom.

Weaver at work.

Design Resource

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Weaver at work.

Details of the loom.

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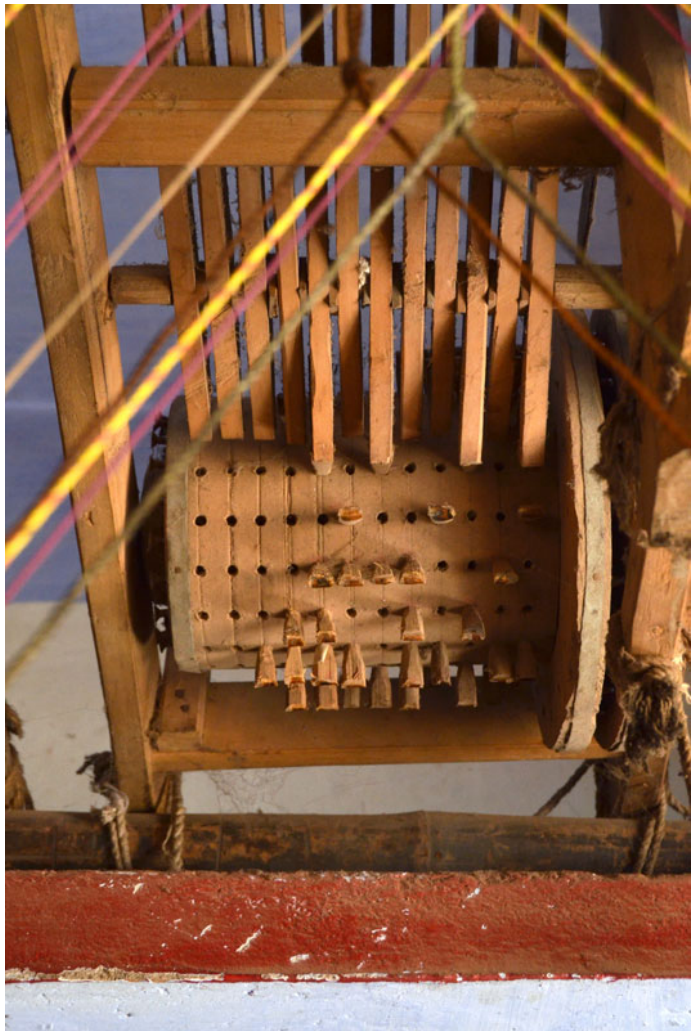
Details of the loom.



Details of the loom.

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Warp.

Pattern beginning to be revealed by weaving the tie-dyed weft into the warp.

Design Resource

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Cylindrical roll at the end of the loom.

Supplementary warp, adding a relief texture in the border of the saree.

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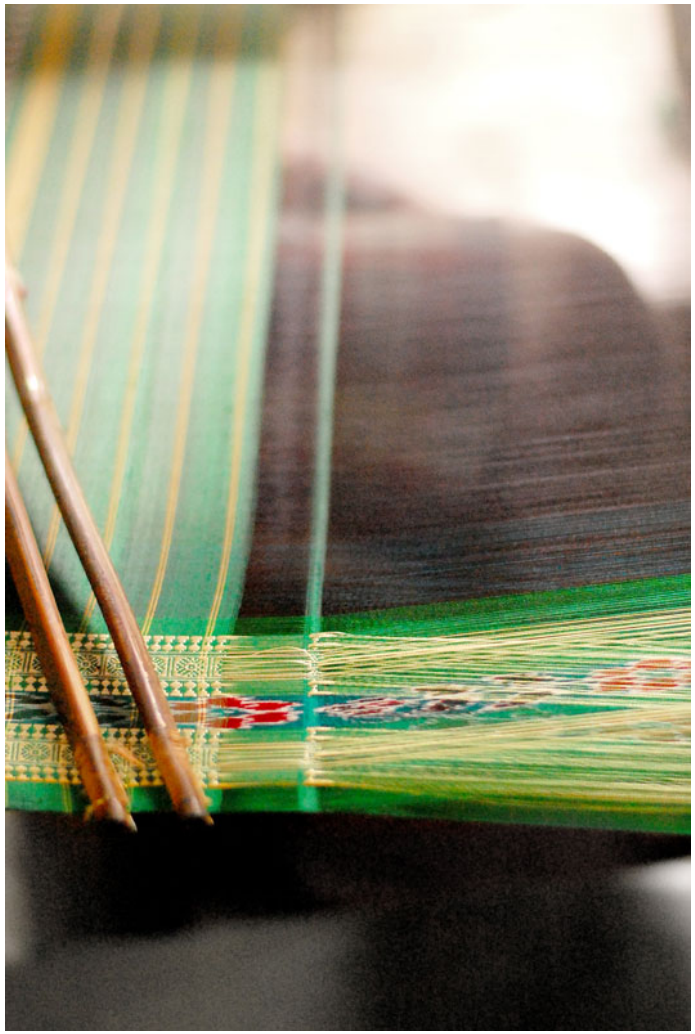
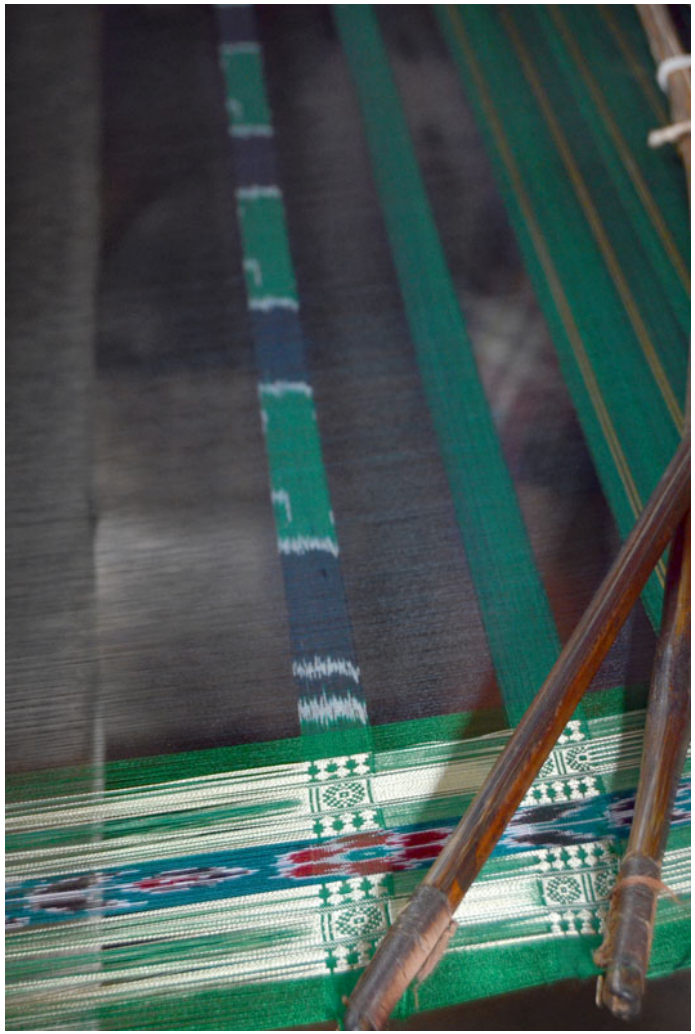


Supplementary warp, adding a relief texture in the border of the saree.



Supplementary warp, adding a relief texture in the border of the saree.

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Details of the reed and the loom, craftswoman at work.

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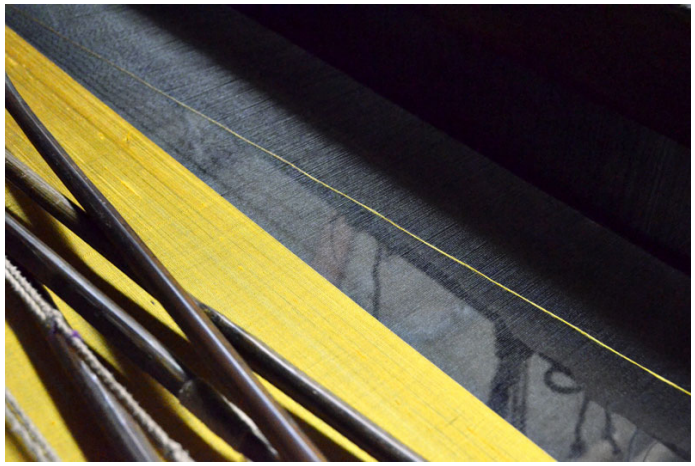
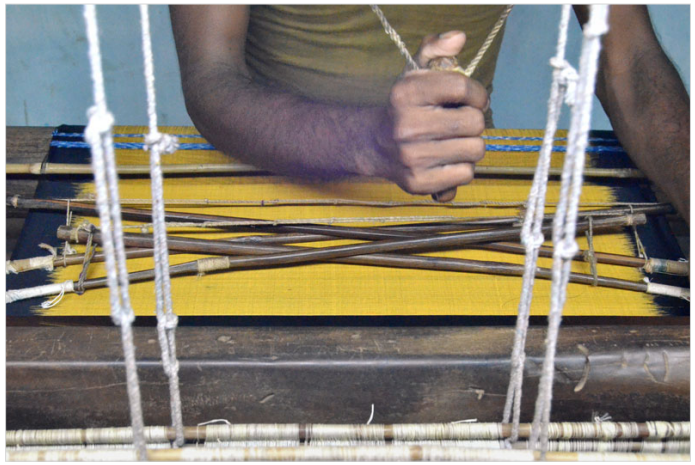


Weaving in progress.



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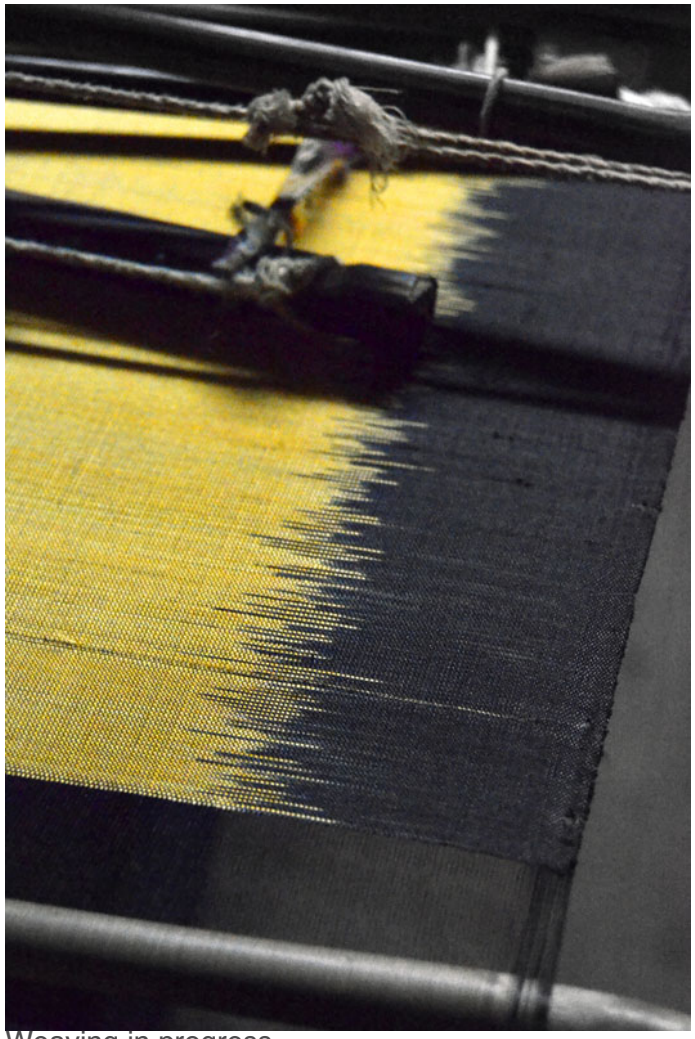

Weaving in progress.

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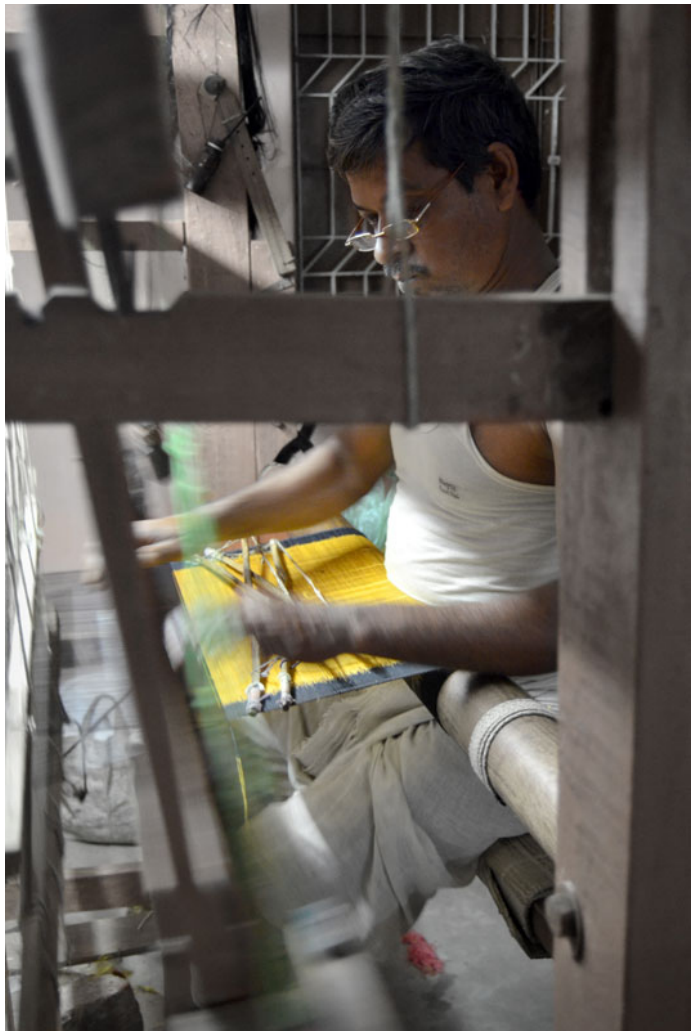

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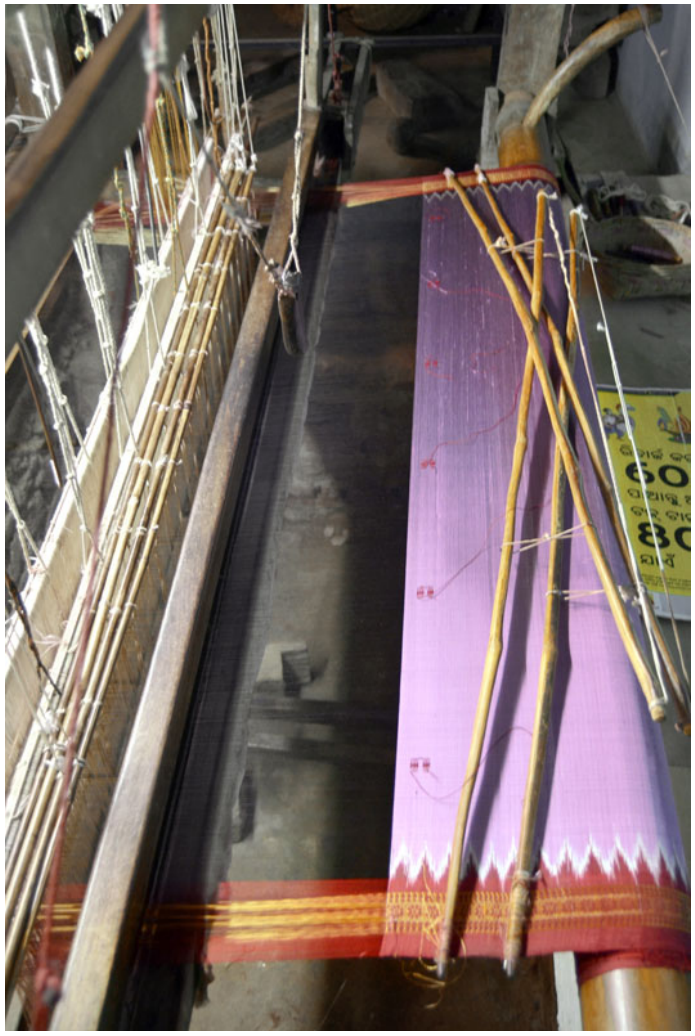

Weaving in progress.

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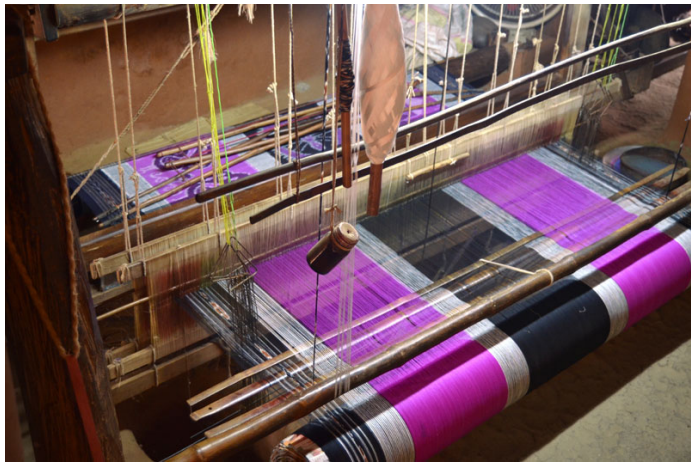

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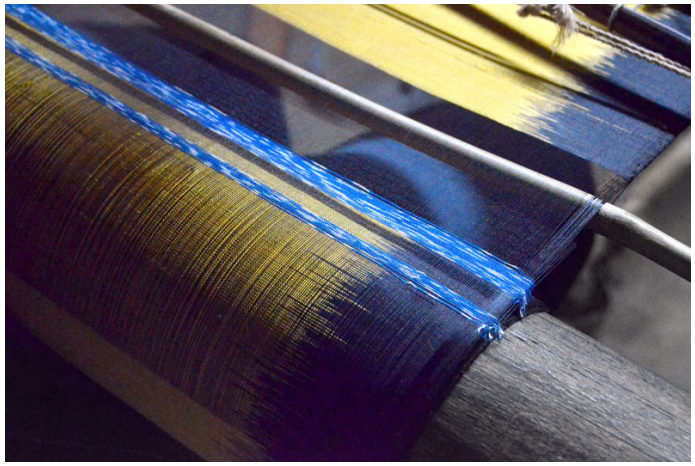

Weaving in progress

The pattern appears as the warp and weft are woven together.

Design Resource

Ikat Textiles of Nuapatna

Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

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Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/ikat-textiles-nuapatna/process/weaving/machine-loom

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Machine Loom

Increasingly, machine looms are being used in the region. All the other processes remain the same and take the same amount of time except weaving is a lot faster. Quite obviously, traditional weaver families find these looms as a threat to their livelihood.

Machine loom.

Design Resource

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Machine loom .

Machine loom.

Machine loom.

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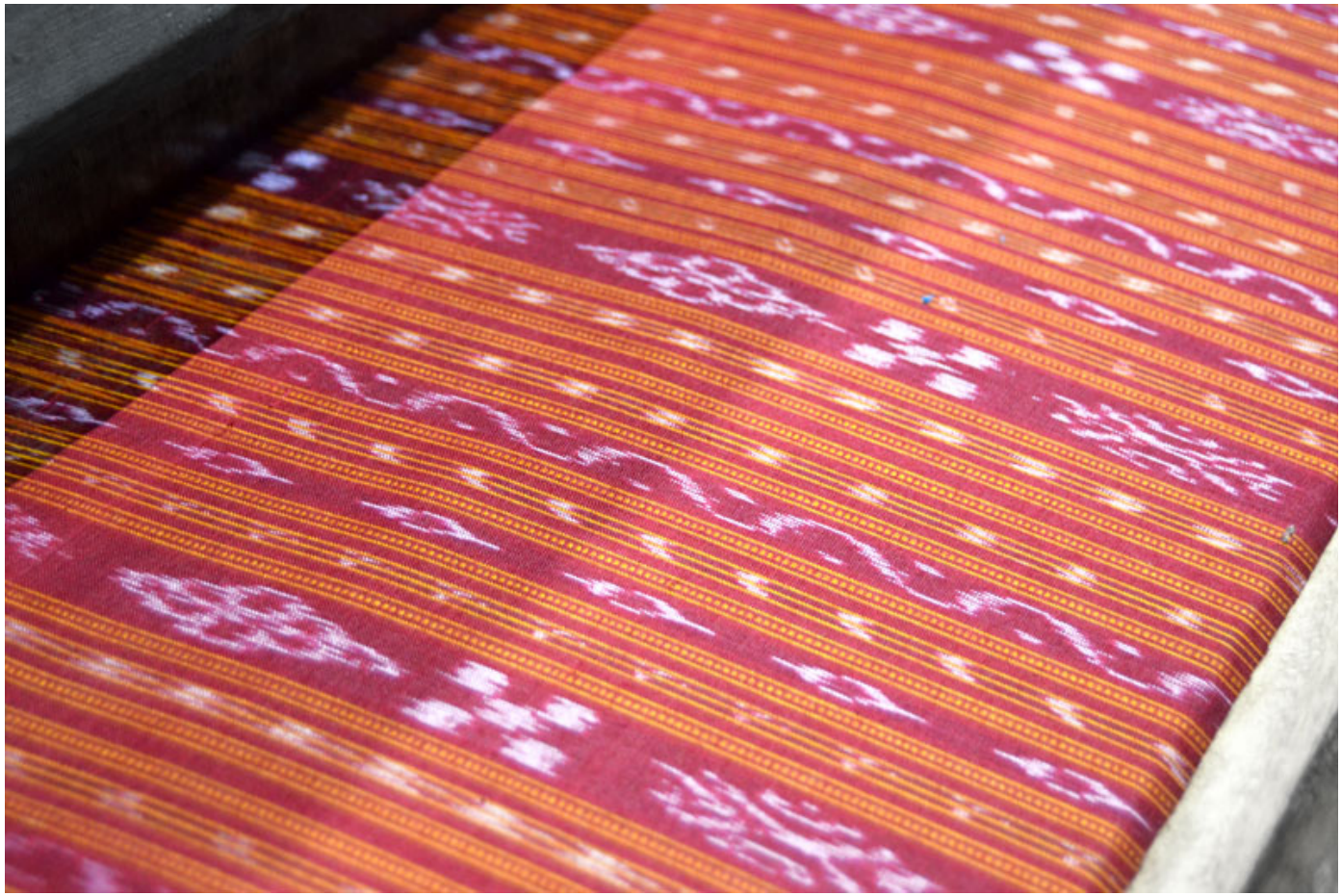

Woven fabric of the machine loom.

Design Resource

Ikat Textiles of Nuapatna

Tie-Resist-Dye and Weaving

by
Sakshi Gambhir
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/ikat-textiles-nuapatna/process/quality-check

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   4d. Weaving
   4e. Quality Check
   4f. Starch
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Quality Check

Once the saree is ready, it is carefully examined for its quality and any defects. Then, it sent for starch.

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Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/ikat-textiles-nuapatna/process/starch

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Starch

Most of the sarees are starched using 'chawal ka paani' (water that is left over after boiling rice). The starched sarees are tightly wrapped over a wooden roll and left to dry in the sun. This gives the fabric some stiffness and sheen. Then, these are carefully folded and sent to the buyers (or shops).

Saree being starched.

Saree being starched.

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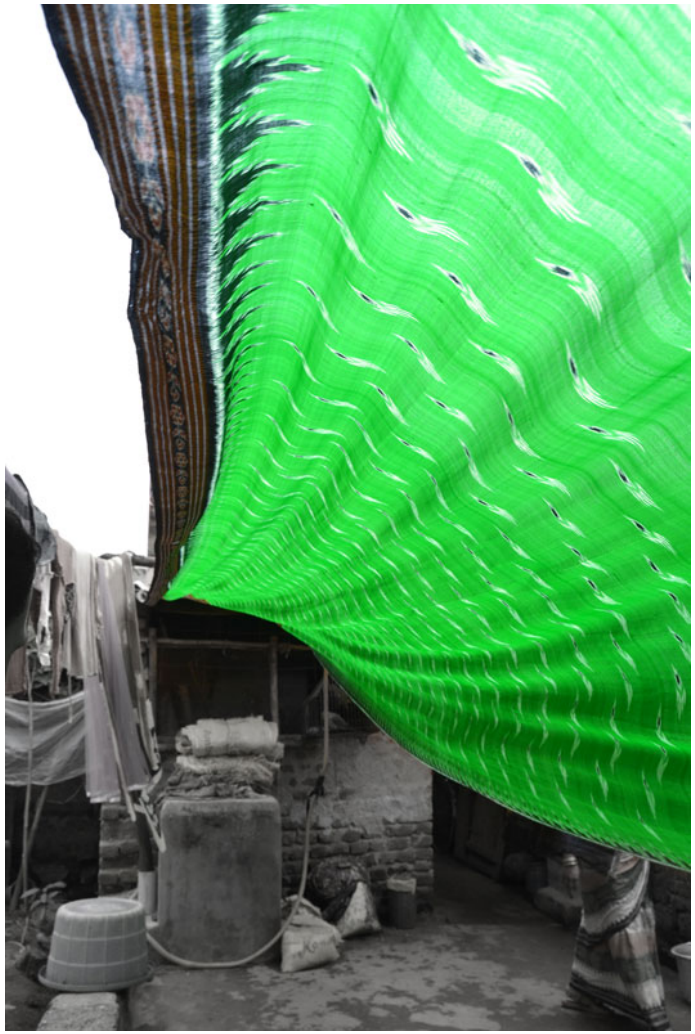
Saree being starched.



Saree left to dry after being starched.

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Saree being starched.

Saree being starched.

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Saree being rolled up.

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Saree being rolled up.

Saree being rolled up.

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Starched sarees left to dry in the sun.

Starched sarees left to dry in the sun.

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Products

Traditionally produced and managed by craftsmen themselves, these products were either consumed by the local population or by people from neighboring regions. Now these products - sarees, dress materials, stoles, ties and furnishings - make for a great export range. The motifs include Lord Jagannath, Dasavatara, other Gods and Goddesses, temple border, lotus, conch, wheel, fishes, animals and calligraphic forms.

Wall hanging with one of the Dasavataras, made by Sehdev Patra.

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Wall hanging with Lord Jagannath.

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Wall hanging with Lord Jagannath.

Wall hanging with one of the Dasavataras.

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Silk stole.

Silk stole.

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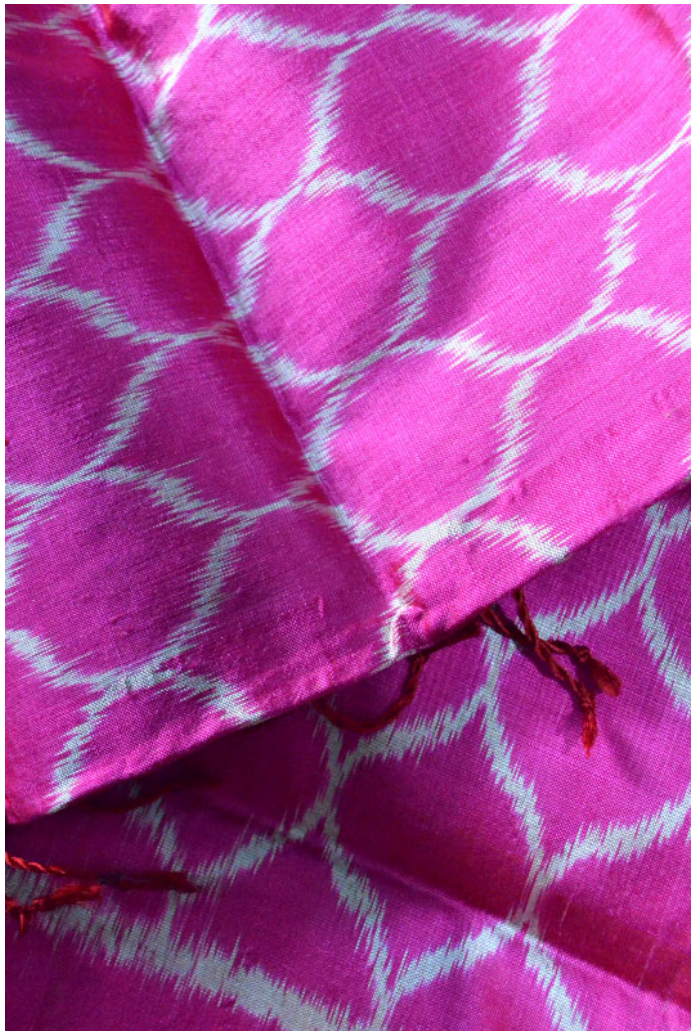
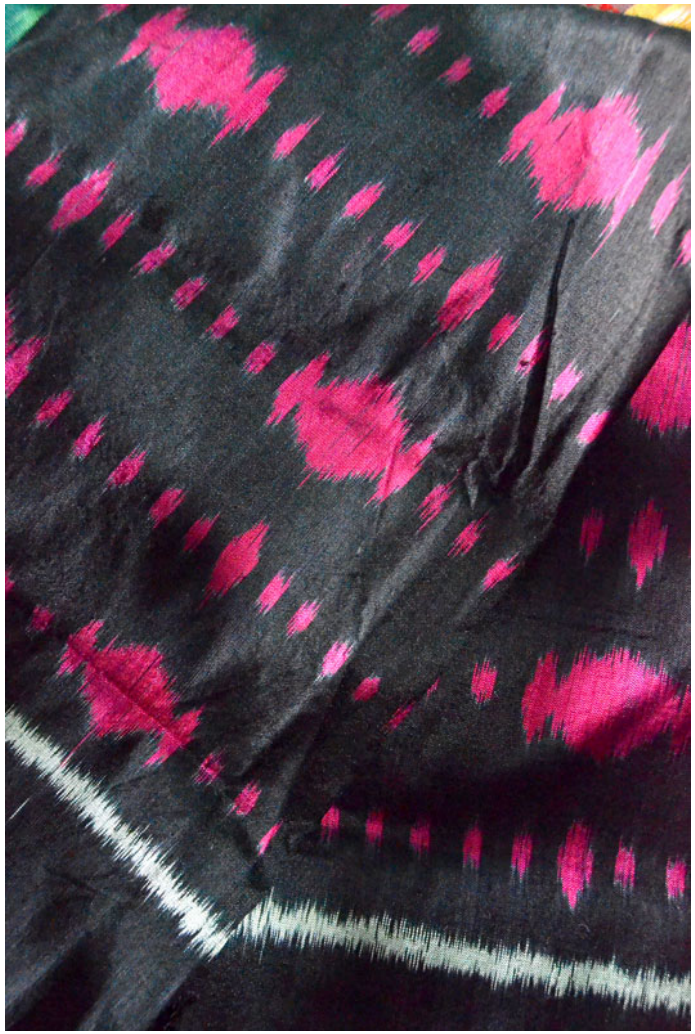


Silk stole.



Silk stole.

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Silk stole.

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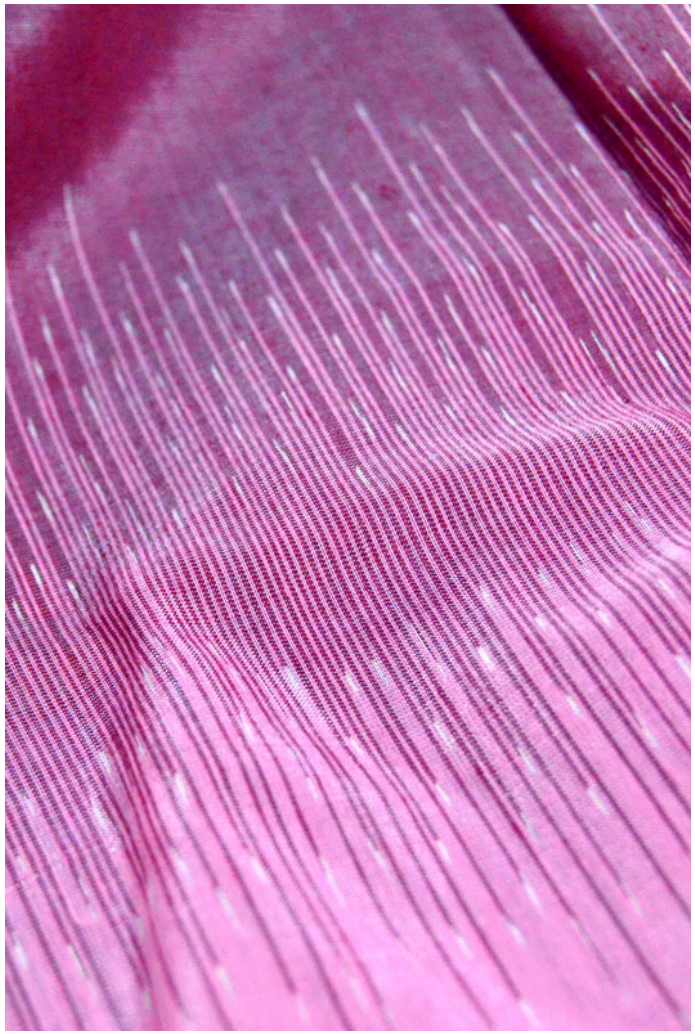
Cotton-silk saree with warli motif.



Geometric pattern saree.

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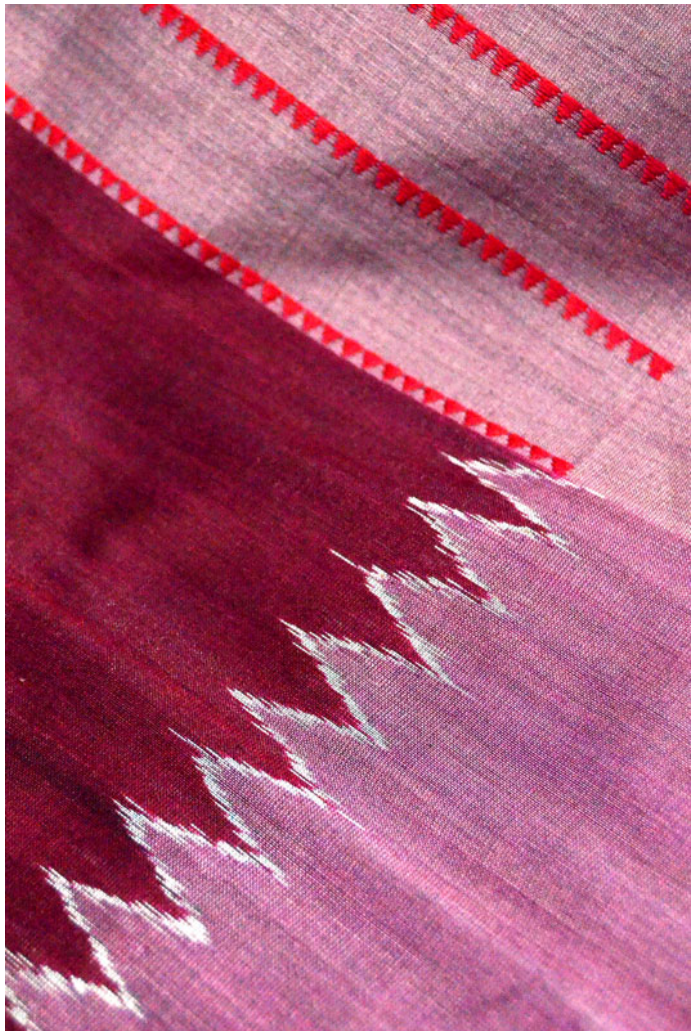
Geometric pattern saree.



Geometric pattern saree.

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Silk saree with calligraphic letterforms.

Silk saree with a motif inspired from rangoli art.

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Silk saree with a motif inspired from rangoli art and shlokas.

Silk saree with a motif inspired from rangoli art and shlokas.

Silk saree with calligraphic letterforms.

Silk stole.

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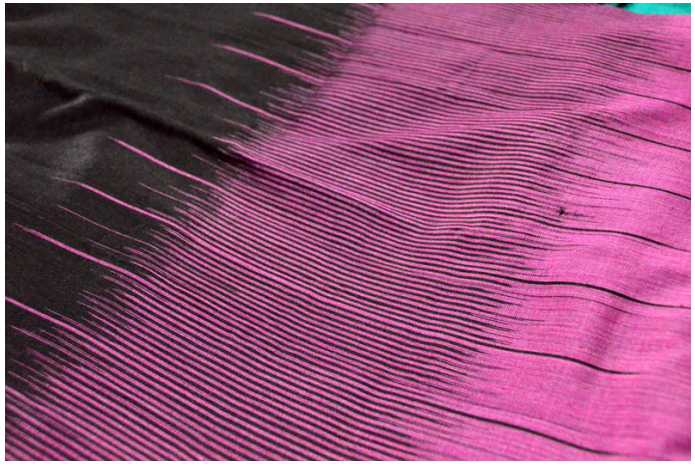
Geometric pattern saree.

Star and moon pattern on a silk stole.



Geometric pattern stole.

Geometric pattern saree.

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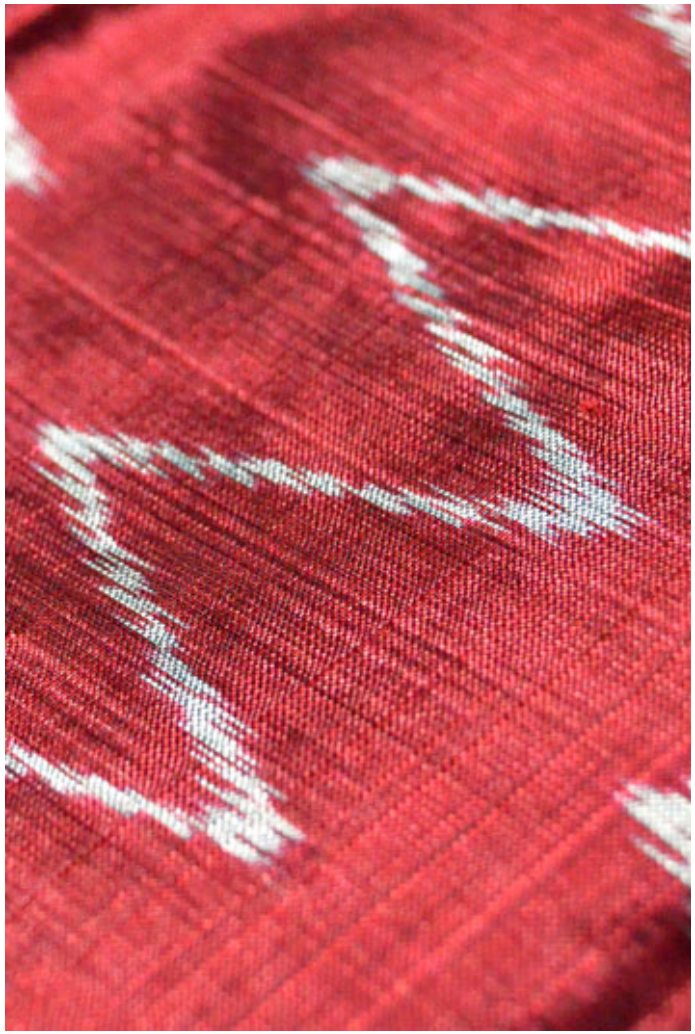

Geometric pattern saree.

Floral pattern saree.

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Temple border.

Silk saree, very typical of Nuapatna

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Buddha wall hanging.

Ganesha wall hanging.

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Fishes-and-swan wall hanging.

Radha Krishna wall hanging.

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Krishna-and-gopis wall hanging.

Radha Krishna scroll (several metres in length), made by SehdevPatra.

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Source:
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1. Introduction
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Contact Details

This documentation was done by Sakshi Gambhir, M. Des. at IDC, IIT Bombay.

You can get in touch with her at sakshigambhir[at]gmail.com.

For further details you can contact to:
• **Hemand Kund**, Manager
Nuapatna Weavers Society
Mobile: 9937531738

• **Sehdev Patra**
Calligraphic Letterform Saree Weaver
Mobile: 9938335591

• **Surendra Das**
Tie-dye Expert
Mobile: 9777547018

You can write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

Helpdesk Details:
Co-ordinator
Project e-kalpa
Industrial Design Centre
IIT Bombay
Powai
Mumbai 4000 076
India
Phone: 091-22-25767820/ 7801/ 7802
Fax: 091-22-25767803
Email: dsource.in[at]gmail.com